Lessening the Burden of Postmen

7037 SHRI RAM RATAN RAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) how many postmen were there in the country on the 1st of May in 1985 and 1995, respectively;

(b) what was the average load on one postman for the two said dates, respectively;

(c) what action is being taken to cope up with the increased load;

(d) whether Government are considering increasing the strength of postmen; and

(e) what measures arc being taken to lessen the burden of postmen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) There were 59036 postmen on 31 -3-85 in the country which increased to 59355 on 31 -3-94. Information for 1995 not yet available.

(b) The average load for postmen widely varies because of density of traffic being different. However between 31-3-85 and 31-3-94 while postmen strength increased by 0.54 traffic increased by 8.96%.

(c) to (e) To cope with the increased workload composite delivery is being done and leave reserve postmen are utilised. Circles are also authorised to redeploy postmen from areas where workload is less. The question of sanctioning additional postmen for which proposals have been received are yet to be finalised.

Role of DOT and Public sector companies in value added services

7038. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government do not envisage any role for the DOT or other public sector Telecom companies in the value added services; and

(b) if so, what is the rationale for denying the opportunity to improve the efficiency and upgrade the technology to DOT and other public sector companies, by way of competition in the value added services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir, MTNL is already providing services like radio paging, voice mail etc. ITI and VSNL are already licensed to provide some value added service. DOT has kept the option open to provide these services in future.

(b) Question does not arise in view of (a) above.

Telephone facilities to Gram Panchayats in Hill districts of Uttar Pradesh

7039. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:
SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have provided telephone facility to 98 gram Panchayats in the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether such facility is restricted to the areas within the State only:

(c) whether Government propose to take any steps to enable villagers to use the telephone facility for communications even to outside the State;

(d) if so, whether Government propose to connect all these telephone lines with Delhi and other major cities; and

(e) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir. Government have provided telephone facility to 1710 Gram Panchayats of hill districts of Uttar Pradesh upto 31-3-1995.

(b) to (e) Sir, communication facility is already available from VPTs to any place in India or abroad by booking trunk call. STD/ISD facilities are at present available through some of the village phones which have been franchised as PCOs. This facility would be extended to other VPTs progressively when the exchanges to which these VPTs are parented get connected

to the STD network. As per an Eighth Plan objective, all exchanges are likely to be provided with STD facility by March, 1997.

Action plan to improve telecom services in West Bengal

7040. SHRI MD. SALIM:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the action plans to improve the inadequate telecom network in the districts bordering the jurisdiction of Calcutta Telephones, to tide over the problems in telecom network in Sunderban area of West Bengal, to improve telecom services in tea gardens of Darjeeling and Dooars in the State; and

(b) the Contingency plans to take care of failure of telecom services during natural calamities in coastal and hilly areas of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The action plan details are given in the statement *(see* below).

(b) Flyaway satellite terminal available with the West Bengal Telecom Circle is being used for providing the emergency telecom Services in case of natural calamities in coastal and hilly areas of the State.

Statement

(i) Action plan of the Department of Telecommunications to improve telecom net-work in the districts bordering the jurisdiction of Calcutta Telephones is as under:

— 17 out of 22 telephone exchanges bordering Calcutta Telephones have already been provided STD facility. The remaining 5 exchanges namely Boinchee, Bellaghata Bridge, Berachampa, Jagatballabpur and Haripal are Planned to be provided STD facility during 1995-96.

— Two more telephone exchanges with STD facility are planned to be installed during 199S-96 at Rajarhat and Bhangar.

(ii) Action Plan to tide over the problems in telecom network in Sundarban area in West Bengal is as follows:-

— Sundarban area consists of 4 SDCAS (Shrot Distance Charging Areas with Short Distance Charging Centre? (SDCCs) Kakdwip, Diamondharbour. Canning and Bosaba. All the four SDCCs are connected with STD facility.

— 5 Out of 8 exchanges in Kakdwip SDCA, 7 out of 9 exchanges in Diamondharbour SDCA, 3 out of 6 exchanges in Canning SDCA and 1 out of 2 exchanges in Gosaba SDCA are having STD facility.

— Remaining 9 exchanges namely Patharpratima, Kashinagar, Roydighi, Magrahat, Lakshmikantapur, Champahati, Basanti, Gocharan and Higgalganj in the 4 SDCAs of Sundarban area are planned to be provided STD facility during 199S-96.

(iii) Action plan to improve the telecom services in tea gardens of Darjeeling' and Dooars is as under:

— Most of the important places in this area have been provided with STD facility.

— Efforts are being made to further improve the STD connectivity by providing stable and reliable transmission media such as optical fibre, microwave and UHF systems.

— One 512 Port & C-DOT SBM trunk automatic exchange is planned to be * provided at Jalpaiguri during 1995-96. This will further improve STD connectivity in this areas.

Post Offices in the Country

7041. SHRI PRAGADA KOTAIAH: WiU the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) how many post offices were there in our country on the 15th August, 1947, 21st June, 1991 and 1st May. 1995;